



A FOUL VILLA'S MEN

by Capt. George B. Rodney

SYNOPSIS.

Automobile of Miss Dorothy Upton and friend, Mrs. Fane, breaks down at New Mexico border patrol camp commanded by Lieutenant Kynaston. The two women are on way to mine of Miss Upton's father, located a few miles across the Mexican border. Kynaston leaves women at his camp while he goes with a detail to investigate report of Villa gun runners. Villa troops drive small force of Carranza across border line and they surrender to Kynaston. Dorothy and Mrs. Fane still at camp when Kynaston returns with prisoners. A blind Mexican priest appears in camp.

An aged and blind priest tells Kynaston and his guests an amazing story of wonderful jewels and a looted shrine and of a long and heart-breaking quest for one rare treasure. You'll wonder, as you read, whether or not the old padre is wandering in both mind and body—for truly his tale is strange.

CHAPTER II—Continued.

While they were eating the appetizing meal that the trumpeter spread for them upon the camp table beneath the solitary live oak that stood before the tent, they watched the sergeant help the stranger down the hill. Taking the blind man to the fire, he seated him upon a saddle that lay near the cooking tent, and came forward with a salute.

"He's a priest, sir—a padre; and from what little I can make out of his lingo he's had a pretty bad time of it, sir. Shall I bring him up?"

"Yes."

Kynaston sprang up.

"Mrs. Fane, do you and Miss Upton object to my asking the old fellow to take his breakfast here with us? I hardly like to send him down among the prisoners to eat. He seems a cut above them, don't you know?"

"Why, of course not, Mr. Kynaston. Please do exactly as you would if we were not here. I am sure he will be very interesting."

So Kynaston went down to the fire, where the old man was explaining in broken English and Mexican patois to the prisoners, for them to translate to the Americans that he was more tired than hungry, but that most of all he desired to hold converse with the commanding officer. Having introduced himself, Kynaston asked the old man to come to his tent and join him in coffee.

They found the two ladies already at their meal. Kynaston seated the old man between the two and poured him a cupful of steaming coffee that woke him into speech.

"Never before, señor, have I crossed the line. A Mayan am I, as all my people were for twelve generations that stretch their hands back even unto the days before there were Spaniards in Tenochtitlan.

"For the space of twelve men's lives have we lived under the shadows of El Tio, seeing always the surf break on the outlying bars. Two years ago I came north, even as Coronado came, part of the way on my feet, part on asses; always with pain, for to the blind, señor, all paths are hard. And at last my dream vanished."

"Thy dream?"

"Aye, señor, my dream, for know thou that I came not without an aim. That aim has been to follow and recover what these thieves of the world have taken."

He pointed his thumb over his shoulder toward the fire, where the prisoners still sat over the bacon and hard bread that were being cooked for them by the cooks of the troop.

"And art thou really blind?"

"So that, señor, for fifty years I have not seen the light of day."

Mrs. Fane and Dorothy murmured their sympathy.

"So I have come, señor. For now three hundred years I and my fathers before me kept the shrine where it has been deposited since the days when Cortes came back from the courts of the old world to hold his court at Cuernavaca, and, finding there in power the evil man, Pedrarias, his enemy, retired to live upon his estates."

"Ye know, señor and ladies, how it was said that the conquistador poisoned his first wife so that he could marry a second wife who should advance his fortunes. It was to this second wife that he gave those wonderful jewels, as all the world knows; the wonderful emeralds that Queen Isabella asked for in vain and that made Cortes the most courted man in all Madrid. Hast thou heard of them?"

Mrs. Fane and Dorothy looked their interest. All people are interested in the mere mention of jewels or precious stones—even those who do not possess them.

"I have heard," said Kynaston slowly, "the same tale all men know, the tale which Gomara wrote to the effect that Cortes received as a part of the ransom of the Emperor Montezuma five great emeralds, and that

when payment was made to the Spanish king of the royal fifth part of the treasure the stones were kept by the conqueror as a part of his own share."

"Dost thou know then, or does any man know, what afterward became of the stones?"

The old man leaned forward in his eagerness, turning toward the sound of Kynaston's voice. His interest was obvious.

Dorothy and Mrs. Fane took no pains to hide their interest now.

"It was said, of course—that thou knowest—that the emeralds were taken home by him to Spain, and that when he married a second time he gave these to his wife. The queen had hinted that she herself was not unwilling to receive as a gift these most wonderful stones."

"They were, señor, as Gomara says, like this: One in the shape of a great rose, the second a fish with eyes of gold, the third an emerald cup, and the fourth a man's head with ruby eyes set in the green surface. With none of these, señor, are we concerned."

"The fifth and the most beautiful of all was a great bell, made of solid emerald, that stood, perhaps—so they tell me, at least, for how can a blind man see?—the height of a man's thumb; carved, mark thee, from the solid emerald—the tongue is made of a pear-shaped pearl, and about the base, carved and set most probably by some skilled workman of Seville, these words, let into the jewel in letters of gold:

"Blessed is he who created thee."

"But, padre, we all know—the world knows—that when Cortes went with his king—Charles—to fight the Moors he took the stones with him, and when he was wrecked at sea off the Algeciras coast the stones were lost."

The old priest sat back clicking his tongue softly.

"Then, señor, if this be true, I and my family for ten generations have been made fools of, for during ten men's lives some member of my fam-

ily has always kept the shrine of Our Lady of Olvidados down in Yucatan, where the old faith still holds, and where men have not gone after strange gods."

"But how in the world if you live in Yucatan do you ever work your way so far north?"

"When General Zapata rose in rebellion after President Diaz had fled to France, the whole country rose with him. Every place was looted, and what few treasures we had were taken."

"We in Trocanto managed to hide the wealth of the shrine, and for months my brother, who had the care of the shrine itself, had little trouble in secreting the wealth that we had hidden for nigh four hundred years."

"We had the stone—no, señor, not the five; only one—the greatest and most valuable. So rich it was—that I am told men's hearts turned to water at the mere sight of it. I know right well that I would have given much to see it for only one little moment; but it was not to be."

"They came, señor, by night—as beasts of prey always come—and they looted the temple and burned it after they had looted. I was not there at the time, but when I returned I found my brother dying of a gunshot wound and my mother— it is best not to go into particulars, señor."

"They had no fear of God. It is lacking always, they say, in a mob that knows neither law nor leader. And the stone was gone—looted—taken, as everything else was taken, with the raiders when they fled to the north."

"Always, señor, our raiders have come from the north, from the days

of old when the Tultecs came down upon the land, and when following them the countless thousands of the red savages drove the Tultecs in headlong flight, bringing death and desolation upon the land. And then the Spaniard came, and—thou knowest the rest, señor."

"I do but speak the empty vaporings of age. I am seventy-six years of age, and I have tracked that stone northward—northward ever since that day when Zapata's men robbed the shrine."

"Those men who fled yesterday across the line, and who found refuge with these have the stone. They took it in fair fight from the rebels, who were moving toward El Paso with it in the hope of selling it for gold with which to purchase arms and ammunition for their cause."

"And they in turn have lost the stone to thee; for a passing cowboy told me that these men had surrendered to the Americans and guided me the greater part of the way to thy camp."

"I am no rebel, señor. I am a churchman, not a soldier. But—I seek the stone—I, now that my brother is dead; I, the Blind Priest of Trocanto, am the lawful guardian of the shrine."

Just then the deep voice of the sergeant broke in.

"Sir, if the lieutenant is ready I'll bring up the packs and the lieutenant can go through 'em."

Kynaston, called back to earth, looked up and nodded.

"Bring 'em all up in front of my tent, sergeant."

The three pack mules, tired and un-groomed, were led up and their packs decanted in front of the tent where Dorothy and Mrs. Fane sat in interested observation.

"There ought to be guns and revolvers and ammunition," commented Kynaston. "Button! Button! Who's got the button? I wonder what they've got packed away in those aparejos."

He soon found out, for under the quiet orders of the sergeant the guards slipped the packs and opened them in front of the wondering eyes of the little group.

"I thought at least we would find that the arms manufacturers of the country had shipped rifles and pistols to them across the border," commented Kynaston. "And I find nothing; absolutely nothing. A petate—sleeping mat—and a lot of dried red peppers, together with a package of beans—fríjoles— Wait a bit! What's that under your hand, Miss Upton?"

Miss Upton, startled, looked curiously at the package under her hand which she had been resting upon the pack. She gave it a twitch, and a bundle wrapped in a rough, red blanket rolled out on the ground. Kynaston promptly picked it up.

"Hm! Three rifles that have no business here and a hundred rounds of ammunition. Wait a bit! Sergeant, look at the arsenal mark on those rifles and see where they were made."

The sergeant scrutinized them carefully in the early light.

"Sir, there's some mark on 'em that I can't make out. It looks like some sort of a flower as well as I can see."

Kynaston took the gun. As far as its appearance was concerned it resembled every other military rifle that he had ever seen, but when he turned the under side to the light he saw stamped in the dark wooden forehand of the piece the full-blown chrysanthemum that was the emblem of only one nation.

"Hm! An Arisaka rifle! Now how the deuce did that come here? It was made as far east as one can get without tumbling over to the westward again. How the deuce did a Japanese rifle come into Mexican hands?"

He had no opportunity to solve the problem, for even as he spoke Dorothy gave an exclamation and stepped back a pace as the covering of a package broke and a flood of silver pesos ran out at her feet.

"There's no proof of stealing in these," commented Kynaston. "Even if there were the stealing was done in Mexico, and the thief was not within our jurisdiction. What is this?"

It was a plain, dirty canvas sack perhaps a foot in depth and it bore the marks of rough handling. He picked it up and juggled it from hand to hand. The officer of the Carranza forces was obviously uneasy at the scrutiny.

"That, señor," he said, "is the greatest prize of all. It was stolen by these rebels across the line and was to be used by them to purchase arms."

Without waiting for any explanation as to what the contents of the sack might be, Kynaston cut the string and poured the contents out upon the saddle blanket which the sergeant had spread upon the ground. Certainly there was nothing in the roll of rags that rolled out to presage great value.

But on turning over the mass with his foot a glow of green caught his eyes. There tumbled out at his feet a great crystal bell the color of the richest blue grass that grows in Kentucky!

Dorothy picked it up.

"The padre was right," she said. "If it is indeed emerald it is worth a king's ransom. What will you do with it?"

And this wonderful emerald bell plays a big part—if you were writing this story, what part would you have the jewel play in the tangled web of war plotting? Its history might be one of bloody intrigue and its future may make it a pawn for a man's life.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

BIG MEN OF THE ALLIES IN CONFERENCE



David Lloyd-George in conference with Premier Aristide Briand of France. Both holding high positions of trust in their respective countries, the great physical likeness of the two men is remarkable. It is said that these leaders also have many characteristics in common and, furthermore, they are the best of friends personally.

FIND SKELETON ON GHOST FARM

Diggers Unearth Barrel With Bones, Baby Shoes, and Some Clippings.

POLICE SEEK MURDER TRAIL

Find Is Second of the Kind in Short Period—Place Believed to Be Haunt of New York Thugs and Murderers.

New York.—On the site of an old farmhouse in Canarsie, where police records show that one man was shot and killed, workmen digging an excavation found recently the skeleton of a man who had been wounded and buried alive more than two years ago, according to Dr. Charles Wuest, coroner's physician. This is the second skeleton found on the premises since the excavating began.

Because after the killing there the place was known as the "Haunted Farm" and none dared go near it, especially at night, the police believe that wholesale murders have been committed and bodies brought to the spot for burial by a band. The ground will be thoroughly excavated under police surveillance.

The skeletons were found at what is now Hegeman avenue and Powell street. Morris Pfum and Samuel Block, laborers, were digging there when their picks struck a barrel about eight feet below the surface of the ground. They excavated it and found that it was heavy when they started to lift it. "It's buried treasure, maybe," Block said, breaking in the barrel head with his pick. To his horror he saw the skeleton partly clothed in what had once been a blue serge suit.

Infant's Shoes in Barrel.

Captain Carey of the Seventh branch detective bureau, was summoned and the body in the barrel was taken to the morgue. There it was examined and the police found a pair of infant's shoes, newspaper clippings and a memorandum.

The body had been jammed into the barrel, but the legs and arms had so shifted that the physician said the murdered man must have been alive and may have regained consciousness.

GIRL STUDIES FOR MINISTRY



Miss Helen Kreps, honor graduate of Stanford university, California, has entered a Unitarian theological school, where she is preparing for eventual ordination as a clergyman.

and struggled to get free. The frontal bone of the skull had been badly shattered and the lower jaw crushed as with a blow.

The victim had a leather belt. His head had been wrapped in a newspaper which was dated June, 1914, the exact date being obliterated. The police took the clippings and memorandum to the station.

The skeleton found last September 12 also was partly clad in a blue serge suit and wore a belt marked "S." The man's skull also had been fractured. With the finding of his bones the police started an investigation.

Many years ago there lived on this ground a truck farmer whose name has been forgotten, but who erected a shanty in which he lived. Six years ago Joseph Verdore, another truck farmer, rented the land, coming from Little Ferry, N. J. Soon thereafter he was joined by a Mrs. Jenny Seelye, the wife of a neighbor, who left her husband. The police allege that Seelye, who lives in Little Ferry, often came in search of his wife and frequently there were brawls at the truck farm.

Kills Her Companion.

On the morning of July 7, 1912, Mrs. Seelye shot and killed Verdore. She was tried in the supreme court of Brooklyn for murder, but acquitted, on the ground of self-defense. She said Verdore was intoxicated, struck at her, and then dashed for a shotgun. She beat him to the shotgun and killed him. After her acquittal she disappeared. After that the old farm had a bad name, and was thought by many superstitious persons in the neighborhood to be haunted. Many contended they heard strange noises which they attributed to the "evil spirits."

The police believe the deserted house may have been used as a rendezvous for murderers and thieves operating in Manhattan and Brooklyn, and that not only were persons lured there and murdered but that bodies murdered elsewhere were brought there and buried. Captain Carey said he would make a thorough investigation, and while the excavations were going on would post a special guard to watch for bodies.

GIRL RAISES PIGS FOR GAIN

At Seventeen, She Is Ambitious to Become a Pork Expert—Nearly Took Prize.

Holtville, Cal.—Raising hogs for pleasure and profit is the occupation of Miss Josie Fuller, seventeen, youngest and best all-around feminine pork producer in the Imperial valley. It is her ambition to become the best expert on hogs in her district. Her herd numbers 50 and is increasing.

"Pig culture isn't esthetic work, of course," said Miss Fuller. "It can't be considered a finishing school for debutantes, but there's money in it."

She has established a record of developing her porkers for the market at a cost of 3 1/2 cents a pound. She came within half a cent of winning the University of California prize, which would have entitled her to a transcontinental trip. The judges decided she spent too much time in caring for her hogs. This was charged up against profit and cut down her score.

THE FISH JUMPED INTO BOATS

Frightened by Motor Craft—Actually Imperiled Children—Appears to Be True.

Waukesha, Wis.—While boating up the Fox river a five-and-a-half pound black bass jumped into the rowboat of Lloyd and Ione Thomas, aged ten and twelve respectively, children of Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Thomas, and because of the confusion that followed a serious accident was narrowly averted.

Other fishermen went to the rescue of the children. It has been reported that on at least six different occasions this fall fish have jumped into boats on the Fox river.

They become frightened, it is said, when struck by the motor boats, which they are unable to see at a distance because of the dirty water.

Man Marries Stepmother.

New York.—Obeying his father's deathbed wish, Royal Peck, thirty-three, has married his stepmother, who is also thirty-three.

MAY PURIFY THE HOMELY MELODIES

New York Education Board Is Displeased With Negro Dialect Tunes.

KIDS NEED BETTER ENGLISH

Proposal Made to Change Wording of "Star-Spangled Banner" So Pensive Lovers Won't Get at Blood-Thirsty Phrases.

New York.—A movement to "purify" America's famous old ditty songs and temper the "Star-Spangled Banner," in the New York public schools, was begun recently. At a conference of the high-school music teachers, at which Dr. Frank R. Rix, music director of the board of education, was present, a committee was appointed to ask the music publishers and the public-school teachers to eliminate all the old negro dialect from songs printed in the textbooks.

Thus, if the movement succeeds, will future generations be without what has been a happy part of all American homes—the quaint and typical dialect of the American negro, as expressed in "Dixie," perhaps the most beloved song in the country, and in Stephen Foster's famous trio, "Massa's in de Col' Col' Ground," "Old Black Joe" and "Swanee River."

Are Mother's Lullabies.

For years American mothers have hummed their babies into slumber with these old folk song favorites. There's hardly a lad who can't hum "Swanee River" or "Old Black Joe." And their charm lies principally in the harmless dialect. There would be little left to them without that.

The chief objection to the songs as they are now universally sung is a purist opposition. Instead of "de," "cayne," "oh," "nebbber" and "mo," darky dialect, for "the," "cause," "of," "never" and "more," the purists would substitute the English words and insist upon careful pronunciation. It may prove a hard job, for the expressions might well be said to be born with American children, so much a part of children's music have they become.

As to the national anthem, extremists would have attempted a capital operation on it, but for strenuous objection. A plan was first broached to cut out the word "fight," as it occurs in the first verse. The objection was that it smacked too much of war and not at all of peace.

More moderate counsel prevailed. The change was not made. The only tempering now will be a slight change of rhythm in the first and third verses; and the adoption of "clouds of the fight" in place of "perilous fight" in the first verse. "Perilous" is a bit too wary, but "clouds" is not. Also the uniform key will be changed from "B" flat to "A" flat to make the singing of the song less difficult for ordinary voices.

"Dialect Confuses Child."

The suggestions of these changes were made some time ago. Doctor Rix said, by him to the board of superintendents, but they were shelved and Doctor Rix doesn't know whether they are dead or not.

"The reason for changing the darky dialect should appeal to any interested person," Doctor Rix said. "We want our children to learn pure English, not a dialect. Then, also, there are many foreign children in our schools. The number is growing constantly. And dialect confuses them. It is hard enough for them to learn our ordinary English. I think the change should be made throughout the country."

"The proposed changes in the Star-Spangled Banner" are suggested in the hope of making the song easier for children and the populace to sing by standardizing it and making it a much more powerful anthem."

JAP GIRL DENTAL STUDENT



Miss Sawaji Misawa of San Francisco is a student in a California dental school. After graduation she expects to practice in Japan.